News release

27 February 2007

Winter 2006/7 figures

Provisional figures released today show that winter 2006/7, with a mean temperature of 5.47 °C, is the second warmest on the UK national record dating back to 1914. All three winter months have recorded above average temperatures, with January 2007 also the second warmest on record at 6.0 °C.

In England, the warmest winter on the Central England Temperature (CET) series remains 1869, with a mean temperature of 6.77 °C. The provisional figure for this winter is 6.4 °C, which would place it 4th in the series.

The south of England has recorded its warmest ever winter with a mean temperature of 6.53 °C, beating the previous high of 6.49 °C set in 1989-90.

Rainfall figures show most areas of the UK to have been very wet with only Northern Ireland recording figures close to average.

Full figures for the season reveal that it has been mild for all parts of the UK, sunnier than average for most parts and wetter than average (based on 1971 to 2000 averages).

Extended warmth

While figures for winter have yielded few records, it has been notably warm and follows a trend of very warm temperatures over the last year. Many records have been broken and the last 12 months (Mar 2006 to Feb 2007) has been the warmest period in the last 348 years on the CET, with a mean temperature of 11.23 °C. This trend is reflected in the national series with all regions, except Northern Ireland recording their warmest rolling 12-month period.

Previously in 2006, new records had been set on the CET for the warmest July (also the warmest of any month), September, autumn and year.

Notes

As the national weather service, the Met Office keeps the climate records for the UK. There are two series that are used to monitor our climate.

1. The Central England Temperature (CET) series is the longest running temperature series in the world going back to 1659. This covers part of the UK, an approximate triangle bounded by London – Bristol – Manchester, but is useful in monitoring how our climate is changing.

2. The Met Office digitised series dates back to 1914 and covers the whole of the UK. It allows regional breakdown to country and county level.

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